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FACTS AND FIGURES

SHOWING THE

DISCRIMINATION

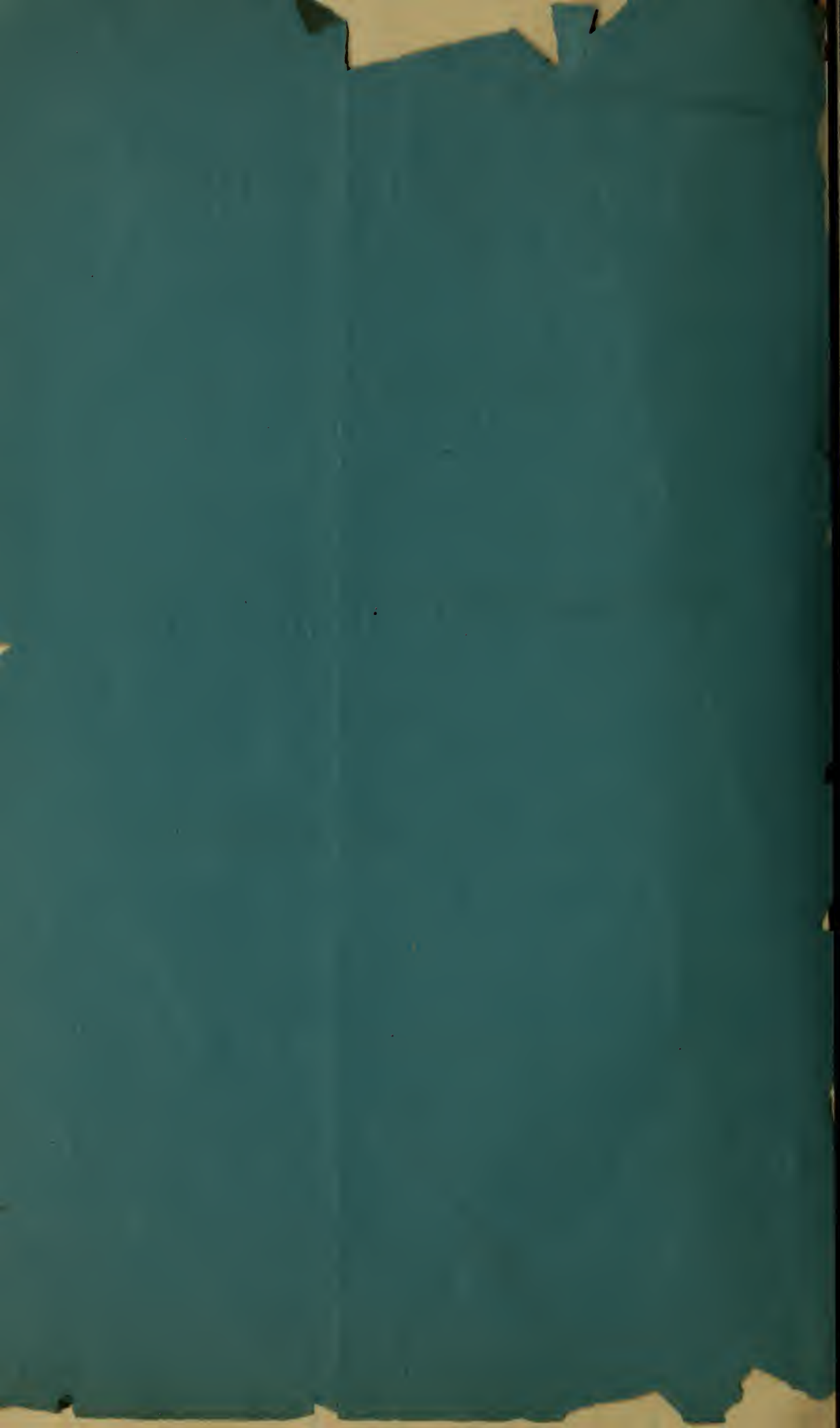
AGAINST THE

EASTERN PORTION OF THE DISTRICT

IN RELATION TO

STREET IMPROVEMENTS, &c.

WASHINGTON, D. C.
H. Q. POLKSTADT, PRINTER
1887



District of Columbia. Citizens.

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Mrs. W. A. Croffut
Nov 17, 1931

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STATEMENT.

TO THE HON. COMMISSIONERS
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,

GENTLEMEN: We come as a committee representing the property holders and tax payers of the eastern part of the District,—not of any particular street or locality, but of East Washington as a whole. We come not to ask for improvements in front of any man's property or on any particular street, but to call your attention specially to what we claim has been a most unjust discrimination against that portion of the District in the expenditure of the public funds for the improvement of the streets, avenues, sewers, water supply, &c., and to invoke a change of policy in that respect.

To guard against misapprehension, we desire to say that we have no desire to antagonize the present Commissioners, but to co-operate with you if possible, in securing a more just and equitable distribution of the District funds. Our object is to present the facts as shown by the records, in order that you may act understandingly, and we do it at this time before you prepare the estimate for the coming year, in order that there may not again be the excuse that provision for the eastern section "was not included in the estimates."

Of all the duties which you have to perform, there is none which so affects the interests of the citizens generally, and of the property-holders in particular, as that of making up the estimates for street improvements. The estimates for all other matters pertaining to District affairs is so fixed by law and so much a matter of course, as to leave you but little if any discretion: but in the matter of street improvements you have full discretion. Now what we ask is, that you shall so exercise that discretionary power as to work "equal and exact justice to all."

As most of you are comparative strangers to the transactions which have occurred here since we were deprived of a voice in our local government in February, 1871, and entirely so in 1878, it is necessary that we state briefly the principal facts, in order that you may clearly understand the situation.

The Board of Public Works expended in all, about \$30,000,000, of which over two-thirds remains saddled upon us as a debt. It is well known that the great bulk of that was spent for improvements in the central and northwest portions of the city and Georgetown, while almost none was spent east of the Capitol.

The Board of Public Works had but fairly commenced operations east of the Capitol when they were abolished by Congress. The princi-

pal work done there was to grade the streets preparatory to future improvements, and the result is that the money that was expended, with a few exceptions, was rather a damage than a benefit; because our graveled roadways were taken away, and in place of them we have, over a large portion of that section, a series of deep cuts or canals, leaving a clay bed that suffocates us with dust in dry weather, and mires us in mud in wet weather. This condition of affairs, with the exception of a few streets, exists from near the outskirts to within three or four squares of the Capitol building, and, in some instances, extends to the Capitol grounds. In some instances the avenues and streets were cut down from *ten to thirty feet*, so that the lots cannot be sold to-day for enough to bring them to grade!

That, gentlemen, is what the Board of Public Works did for East Washington.

Turning now to what has been done by your predecessors since, you will find that it has been a continuous policy of discrimination against East Washington; and lest you may think that this is merely the loose talk of a lot of "cranks" and "chronic grumblers," as we have been elegantly termed by some of your subordinates—men who are living upon taxes paid by us in common with other citizens—we invite your attention to the statements of Senators on this point, made during the discussion of the District appropriation bill at the last session, and which may be found in the *Congressional Record* of February 24th, 1883, pages 48 to 55.

Said Senator PLUMB:

"There has always been a great deal of controversy in this city as to the place where these funds for the replacement of pavements should be expended. The sub-committee having the bill in charge here gave a somewhat extended consideration to the subject last year, and were satisfied that *some partiality was being exhibited, that pavements were being replaced in quarters of the city beyond the actual need of improvements, and to some extent for the purpose of inducing improvements in some way that it is not proper to characterize in any harsh way; but everything being comparative, we concluded that on the whole more money should be expended upon the eastern side and upon the streets upon the east side of the Capitol.* Some conversation ensuing about the matter, and these complaints being brought to the attention of the Commissioners through the intervention of the sub-committee, the Commissioners stated that *another year, being this present year, more money actually and in proportion would be by them expended in the replacement of pavements on the east side of the Capitol.* It was not designed to revise their schedule and set up a new classification of streets to be attended to, but to emphasize the expression that some of this money shall go east of the Capitol, as I have stated.

There is only a very small portion of this money provided to be expended east of the Capitol, I think less than \$25,000—I am not sure what precise amount—while the sum of nearly \$40,000 is provided to be expended to *replace a stone pavement, good but rough, on H street, for the purpose of connecting the northwestern portion of the city with the country in the direction of the race-course, carrying all the trade and travel away from and by and around what might be called the East Capitol side of the city. In making this change, the committee designed to practically compel the Commissioners to an expenditure which they regard more suitable than that provided for in the estimates.*"

Said Senator SHERMAN:

"I sympathize entirely with the complaints that have been made by the people

of this District, by large petitions sent here from time to time from those living in the eastern part of the city. THEY HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO PAY THEIR SHARE OF THE TAXES ON A VERY LARGE VALUATION OF THEIR PROPERTY, WHILE ALL THE IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN IN THE PART OF THE CITY WHERE MOST OF US LIVE, THE WESTERN AND NORTHWESTERN PORTION OF THE CITY, AND IT IS A JUST COMPLAINT THAT CANNOT BE ANSWERED. I myself have inquired of the Commissioners *why it is that this discrimination has been made against the eastern part of the city*, and they say it is all because, in the early improvement of this city, under the old Board of Public Works, expensive wooden pavements were laid down in the western part of the city, and they are now so poor as to be much worse than any kind of an ordinary country road, and therefore the money must be first expended to replace those pavements.

"I do not believe this is a sufficient answer to the complaint that has been made on the part of these people, most of them poor. They have been compelled to pay taxes and not enjoy any of the benefits of the improvements for which their taxes go."

Indeed, if the committee could see their way clear to *require a proportionate expenditure in the eastern part of the city, I think it would be more just*. I should vote for a proposition that would require fully one-fourth of the expenditure under this appropriation to be made in the eastern part of the city, or *one-third, in order to repair this injustice*; but I suppose that would be rather striking blindly at the matter, and therefore I think it is better to give the commissioners the money they ask for to complete the improvements proposed in the bill, the schedule of which we have, and which I believe covers the replacement of all the wooden pavements now necessary to be replaced, and *then with the hope that in the next year's appropriation some kind of justice will be done to the people living in the eastern part of the city.*"

Referring to a proposed reduction of the amount he said:

"I think it will be better to follow the plan of the Commissioners, to give them enough money to replace the wooden pavements, and make this proviso, that a reasonable distribution shall be made of the money provided by Congress, with the hope that in the next year the complaints of those citizens that have been laid on our table year after year will be fairly met by a proportionate appropriation of money for the improvement of streets in the eastern part of the city."

And after speaking of the great injustice done to the people in the southeastern section, by allowing the B. & P. Railroad to run through there, he adds:

"The result has been that the eastern part of this city has been gradually going to decay, while the western part of the city has become magnificent in its improvements, and magnificent in its proportions. All that part of the city lying between this Capitol and Georgetown has increased nearly threefold. Indeed, within fifteen years property worth 20 or 30 cents a foot has come to be worth two or three dollars a foot; and all that because the Government has seen fit to concentrate its improvements in the western part of the city, while the price of property in the eastern part of the city has gradually gone down and down. The reason is merely because the government of the District under acts of Congress has constantly discriminated against this part of the city."

And again, in referring to an amendment offered by Senator Ingalls, he said:

"I sympathize entirely with the amendment of the Senator from Kansas [Mr. Ingalls], but I am afraid that on account of the words of limitation in the previous part of the clause it will not accomplish its purpose. The section now is confined to work on sundry avenues and streets and the replacements of pavements on streets named in classes A, B, C and D of Appendix B, b, referred to. Looking at Appendix B, I find that the streets are all named. Two of them seem to be east of the Capitol, one East Capitol street, and the other H street."

And he added :

“H street really ought not to be charged to the eastern part of the city, because the improvement of H street is really for the benefit of the western part of the city.”

Said Senator INGALLS :

“A very casual inspection of the superficies of this city will convince everybody that *great partiality has been done and great injustice done*. There used to be a story current about General Grant in his humbler days to the effect that he once declared that he wished he could be mayor of the city of Galena ; and when asked the reason of that ambition he said it was because he wanted to have a sidewalk laid from the depot to his residence. *That illustrates the general vice that follows the location of the municipal authorities in any one quarter of the city.*— It is a fact that the District Commissioners, as a rule, have been selected from the northwestern portion of Washington, and, without any impropriety or without any abuse of their functions, *the result has inevitably been that all the expenditures and all the improvements and all the advantages from the expenditure of money have been in that direction, so that we now have the spectacle of a city entirely improved, so far as pavements are concerned, up to the western boundary.*

“I believe that the streets have all been laid with concrete, that the wooden pavements have been torn up and replaced either with stone or with bitumen, so that nothing there remains to be done except to keep them in repair. *But with regard to this portion of the city it is apparent to any one that great wrong exists. Take North Capitol street, one of the main approaches to the Capitol itself ; from the entrance to the public grounds to C street, it is to-day merely a mud-hole, it is a morass almost, in which wagons of ordinary weight would become mired. Not only is there no wooden pavement, but there is no pavement at all. There is no reason why that avenue, which is one of the great radiating avenues from the Capitol, should not have been paved. It has been favoritism, it has been injustice, it has been a partial appropriation of the public funds.*

Mr. EDMUNDS. The expenditure hitherto has been in that part of the city which the Supreme Court of the United States held could not be investigated.

Mr. SHERMAN. *Where nearly all of us live.*

Mr. INGALLS. It has been appropriated where nearly all the property-holders in the Senate live and *where the commissioners hitherto resided.*”

Said Senator ROLLINS :

“Before it is passed over I desire to say a word upon the subject, because my attention has been called to it as a member of the Committee on the District of Columbia very often during the last four or five years.

“I had some experience myself while residing on Capitol Hill. I saw year after year the great body of the money appropriated applied for the improvement of the streets *in the west and northwest portions of the city to the almost utter neglect of the streets and avenues of the east side of the city, east of the Capitol.* I think if any Senator will take the map which lies upon the desk of the Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. CAMERON] and look at it, he will see at a glance what *great injustice has been done to the people residing in the eastern portion of this city.* There the streets and avenues are colored in such a way as to indicate just what streets have been improved, and how they have been improved, and what streets have been utterly neglected in this expenditure of money for the District of Columbia. *It is a most wonderful exhibit and shows the great injustice that has been done by the utter neglect of a proper distribution of the funds of the District of Columbia.*

“I concur in this matter most heartily with the Senator from Ohio and both Senators from Kansas in the remarks they have made. Take the avenues : *Maryland avenue*, a magnificent avenue extending from a point east of the Capitol grounds ; while the authorities are improving avenues and streets miles distant in the west and northwestern portions of the city *they are doing comparatively nothing for this avenue and others in the portion of the city east of this building.*

“Now, under the proviso which has been recommended by the Committee on Appropriations, what will be the result ? If the Commissioners spend all the money that has been estimated for the eastern portion of the city, it will be *only*

10 per cent. of the whole amount. *Even that would be unjust.* I should be glad to have the committee go still further and make a further amendment to provide that *a larger proportion of this sum shall be spent in that direction.*

"I speak now, I think, impartially, because I live in the northwestern portion of the city, and the expenditure of money there is a source of convenience and comfort to me. I have left Capitol Hill, but I want to call the attention of the Senate to *this great injustice.*"

In reply to the inquiry why an amendment for paving a street in the northwest had been stricken out, and which the Senator said he had offered on the supposition that the former policy of spending all the money in the northwest section was to be continued,—

Senator PLUMB said :

"The committee did not purpose to perpetuate it (this policy) at all events, but *proposed to prevent, if we could, the expenditure of so large a portion of money in the northwestern part of the city.* The District Board of Commissioners have been treated by Congress as persons not entitled to be trusted with any considerable discretion as to the expenditure of money. Instead of giving them sums in gross to be expended, we give them items the same as we do employes in the Treasury Department and other officers directly under our charge.

"We ask them to make report of the streets on which they will make improvements, and then appropriate for those particular streets, understanding that their judgment may be changed half a dozen times before the expenditure can be made. We give them clerks by name, and so on all the way through this bill. They, in turn, I take it, somewhat accepting the view that Congress takes of their functions, *divide up their own responsibility,* and the care of the streets falls to one person, of the police to another, and so all the way around; and the board is three distinct atoms in place of being one unit. *In that way, perhaps, to some extent, the designation of streets has fallen into the hands of a particular person.* The board has been recently somewhat reorganized; it is expected that it will be still further reorganized by the appointment of a new commissioner or a continuation of the old one for a definite term. Out of either or both of these contingencies will arise perhaps a better condition of things than we have had heretofore.

"I do not know that any language can be devised (unless the Senate were prepared to take up the schedules and go through them for the purpose of picking out particular streets to be improved other than those named) under which anything effective can be done. *The action of the committee was a protest against what is proposed for the coming year, and a protest based upon the action of the commissioners for the preceding year, and upon the understanding had last year that the system of improvements should not hereafter be carried on so extensively for the benefit of the northwestern part of the city.*

"It has been the plan, as I think it still is, to carry on the work of placing sidewalks and curbing and guttering *in front of unimproved property far beyond, or at least, some considerable distance beyond, the residence portion of the city.* At all events, the effect of that is, *whatever the design may be, to increase largely the value of such property.*"

That this discrimination was the fault of the Commissioners was clearly the opinion of the Senate Committee, as shown by the following, in answer to an inquiry why these abuses were permitted.

Mr. COCKRELL. I should like to ask the Senator how we are going to correct the abuses of which he speaks WHEN THE COMMISSIONERS YEAR AFTER YEAR PERSISTENTLY REFUSE TO MAKE ANY ESTIMATE FOR THE EASTERN PART OF THE CITY? THEY DO NOT PUT IT IN THEIR ESTIMATES, and hence we must take the responsibility of directing them

We do not deem it necessary to add any words of our own to the

foregoing statements of Senators. The charge is clear, full and specific, and we think fully confirms and justifies our repeated complaints; and it is a significant fact, that not a word to the contrary was uttered by a single Senator.

PROOFS TO SUSTAIN THE CHARGE.

We now call attention to some facts and official figures, as proving the truth of the charge of discrimination, and we take only those figures which relate directly or indirectly to the streets, sewers and water.

The Report of the Commissioners for 1879, p. 1, shows expenditures, as follows :

Replacing wood pavements.....	\$299,285 02
Repair and improvement of streets.....	34,695 53
Sewers.....	44,392 17
Permit work.....	2,397 61
Water Department (including \$29,395 40, part payment for stand-pipe).....	82,686 08
Engineers Department.....	143,817 08
Total for 1878.....	\$607,273 49

Report of 1880, p. 1, shows :

Replacing wood pavements.....	\$199,779 39
Repair and improvement of streets.....	197,491 31
Sewers.....	117,303 66
Repair and cleaning sewers.....	13,795 81
Permit work.....	13,527 24
Engineers Department.....	91,081 93
Water Department.....	169,575 65
Total for 1879.....	\$812,555 17

Report of 1881, p. 1 :

Replacing wood pavements.....	\$271,288 82
Repairs to concrete pavements.....	51,847 56
Repairs to 7th street road.....	14,995 50
Survey for extension of streets and avenues.....	4,988 34
Sewers.....	115,391 75
Permit work.....	20,405 09
Water Department.....	140,738 74
Total for 1880.....	\$669,654 80

Report of 1882, page 135 :

Replacement of pavements and improvement of streets and avenues.....	\$300,000 00
Repairs of concrete pavements.....	49,784 53
Material for permit work.....	19,947 24
Repairs to Macadam roadways.....	4,991 02
Repairs to streets, alleys and avenues.....	19,987 76
Repairs to country roads and suburban streets.....	19,971 52
Division of streets, alleys and country roads, office.....	5,600 00
Engineer's Department.....	32,409 63
Water supply.....	97,968 95

Sewers—cleaning and repair.....	19,981 76
Lateral sewers.....	14,999 90
New York avenue sewer.....	6,854 98
Boundary street auxiliary sewer.....	79,380 79
Survey for extension of streets and avenues.....	4,986 60

Total for 1881..... \$772,824 7

Appropriation act, approved March 3, 1883:

Engineer's Department.....	\$61,450 00
Improvements—repair of streets and for sewers.....	535,000 00
Water Department.....	95,861 50

Total..... \$592,311 50

SUMMARY:

For 1878.....	\$607,273 49
" 1879.....	812,555 17
" 1880.....	669,654 80
" 1881.....	772,824 78
" 1882.....	592,311 50

Total since 1877..... \$3,454,619 74

What East Washington Has Had of It.

From the peculiar manner in which the estimates were made by the Commissioners, and which Secretary Sherman, in his letter transmitting them to Congress, December 10, 1879, denounced as a violation of the act of June 11, 1878, in that they did not "show in detail the work proposed to be undertaken by them during the fiscal year next ensuing, and the estimated cost thereof," it is impossible for us to show precisely what proportion of this sum of nearly three and a half millions has been expended east of the Capitol; but there are some data which will give an approximate idea.

In the first place, a glance at the map of street improvements accompanying the Commissioners' Report for 1882 shows that the great bulk of it has been expended west of the Capitol, and mostly in the northwest quarter.

Second, by taking the schedule of streets to be improved in 1882, and picking out those in the four different quarters, into which Lieutenant Green told the Senate committee they had divided the city, we find the \$355,875 appropriated, was divided as follows:

For the northwest quarter.....	\$273,500
" southwest.....	20,750
" southeast.....	57,125
" northeast.....	4,500

this \$4,500 being expended on North Capitol street in the vicinity of the Government Printing Office, on a street that is not and cannot be opened through, because of the B. & O. R. R. and its depot, where it is of no benefit to those residing east of the Capitol.

Third. The Commissioners, estimate for street improvements for 1883-4 amounted to \$374,732.25, and it included streets east of the Capitol, as follows:

East Capitol, from 4th to 11th.....	\$13,918 50
North Capitol, B to C (one-half).....	3,398 75
Penna. avenue (north side) 8th to 11th.....	9,450 00
A north, 9th to 10th.....	7,437 00
Fifth, Penna. ave. to Va. ave.....	7,000 00

Total amount east of the Capitol.....	\$44,204. 25.
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or but a little more than *one-ninth*. Or, if we take the amount appropriated for streets, sewers, surveys, permit work, engineers and water department amounting to \$705,853.50, it is but *one-sixteenth*.

We are aware that the appropriation bill includes, for H street north from North Capitol to Boundary, the sum of \$50,566.25, less \$3,375 which the street railway company is expected to pay; but, as stated by Senator Sherman, that ought not to be charged to East Washington, as it is really for the benefit of the northwest; or, as Senator Plumb said, it is to connect the northwestern portion of the city with the country in the direction of the race-course, and he might have added, for the special benefit, also, of the Washington Brick Machine Co.

But there is something more to be said about this H-street expenditure. An examination of the records shows that there has been already expended on that street, from North Capitol to Boundary—the very ground covered by the present estimate—no less than \$138,980.37!

See Report of 1876, pp. 224, and 276.

It is already paved with stone, rough, it is true, but far better than none. When Senator Dawes requested that just such a pavement on I street might be replaced with concrete for only three squares, Commissioner Dent replied that there was some twelve miles of such pavement in the city, and that they could not think of such a thing until other streets, which had never had any, were provided with some kind of a pavement. No wonder Senators considered it an outrage to tear up that pavement and replace it with Belgian blocks, as pretended, but with asphalt, as we now understand, thus spending more on it than in all the eastern section together. Over \$12,000 of this is represented in the estimates as being for the replacement of wood pavements, when, as a matter of fact, there is no wood pavement there—it was replaced by gravel two years ago. While that

street will thus have received nearly \$190,000, there are whole squares, all built up within a short distance from the Capitol, which have not received a cent since the inauguration of the Commissioner form of government in 1878.

It is therefore no wonder that Senator Plumb said the action of the committee was intended as a protest against the proposed action of the commissioners.

It was clearly the intention of the Senate that this \$50,000 instead of being expended on H street should be added to the amount to be spent east of the capitol. As reported from the House, the total amount for streets was \$350,000, which the Senate Committee reduced to \$250,000. Senator Ingalls offered an amendment restoring the amount to \$350,000 with the proviso—"*That one-third of said sum shall be expended on the avenues and streets east of First street west.*"

On motion of Senator Edmunds, the amount was fixed at \$300,000.

Then Senator Sherman offered the following, which was adopted, viz:

"*And in addition thereto there shall be expended out of the said sum for the improvement of streets and avenues east of First street west, \$50,000.*"

Mr. INGALLS. That is in lieu of the one I offered, to which I consent."

By some mysterious operation, this proviso that this \$50,000 should be expended on the streets and avenues east, was dropped out of the bill, and does not appear in the law. It clearly did not mean on H street, because if it had, it would not have said "*streets and avenues.*"

When some of us met Lieut. Green before the Senate Committee, in the spring of 1881, and called attention to the expenditures on unoccupied streets, such as South Capitol and New Hampshire avenues, his reply was that the policy adopted was to improve the avenues and principal streets first. As an illustration of how that policy has been applied to the disadvantage of the eastern section, look at the map. While nearly every avenue west of the Capitol has been improved not one of those east of it has been improved except a portion of Pennsylvania avenue and East Capitol street. Massachusetts avenue is paved with asphalt from Rock Creek to New Jersey avenue near the Baltimore & Ohio Depot, but not a foot of it east of there. In fact, in driving over that avenue to-day, from New Jersey avenue to North Capitol street, one has to twist and turn in all directions to avoid the mud-holes to get along at all.

If it be said that those in the western section are more used and therefore more necessary, we will call your attention to a comparison of New Hampshire and Maryland avenues. The former extends from the river at the foot of 27th street parallel with Rock Creek, to the junction of 15th and Boundary streets. It runs through the outskirts of the northwest portion, and what was recently a succession of gulleys,

pond-holes, and commons. For near half a mile, there is not a building on it even now. It is not one of the main thoroughfares leading into the country or anywhere else, and over a portion of it a vehicle seldom passes. And yet, on that avenue there was expended up to 1876, \$196,338.16.

See Report for 1876, pp. 311 to 313:

Subsequently there was expended on it the sum of.	1,517 14
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See Report for 1877, p. 135:

Since 1878 there has been expended on it the further sum of.	55,463 70
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See Commissioners estimates for 1880, 1, 2, 3, thus making in all no less than.	\$252,819 00
Over a quarter of a million,	

It is no wonder that a member of the "real estate pool" advised a citizen of the Hill to invest on New Hampshire avenue, as a speculation, and gave as his reason, that "they had induced the authorities to expend a large sum there, and were going to get still more."

On the other hand, as stated by Senator Rollins, Maryland avenue is a magnificent avenue, and extends from the Capitol direct to the northeast boundary, where it receives the travel from Bladensburg and the country beyond, and all that crosses Benning's Bridge from the east way out into Maryland, and in fact receives more travel from the country than any other street except Seventh. Indeed, so important was it considered by the Board of Public Works, that as early as 1872, they had decided to pave the whole of it, and *it is represented as paved* on the map published by them exhibiting the streets and avenues "completed and in course of completion," dated November 1, 1872. With the exception of spreading on it some dirt by courtesy called gravel, there has been nothing done on it since 1878; and the only thing done by the Board of Public Works was to grade it, leaving many of the houses and lots perched up in the air from five to thirty feet. To-day the lots will not sell for enough to bring them to grade, and some of the owners have actually abandoned them, rather than attempt to pay the special improvement tax imposed for the grading! That is a fair sample of how the policy of improving the avenues first, has been applied in the eastern section.

What has been done for the other avenues east of the Capitol is well expressed by the following from the *Star* of June 30th, ult.:

"The fact that our boasted Pennsylvania avenue, the great artery and thoroughfare that sweeps in its majesty from Rock Creek by the way of the Presidential Mansion and the Capitol and eastward far beyond, finally loses itself in numerous deep and rugged ravines, is known, perhaps, to but very few. At least a half mile of its extent remains in the same condition in which the British troops left it in 1814, when the bridge was burnt. This is a burning shame; and until we can drive from one end of this avenue to the other we should refrain from speaking of it as the 'grandest street in the world.'"

An appropriation of \$140,000 has been secured for a bridge across the river above Georgetown, although there are two now there, but little further apart than Benning's and Anacostia bridges across the Eastern Branch, besides the Long bridge, further down. Why, then, should not Pennsylvania avenue be opened, and a bridge built across the Eastern Branch? As the above article adds:

"The alluvial lands all along the Eastern Branch are admirably adapted to the purpose for which they are used, viz.: market gardening. On the highlands adjoining the gardens are many eligible and beautiful sites and a few handsome residences, and the health of the people will compare favorably with those of any other portion of this District, even that of the famed northwest. Fruits of every variety adapted to this latitude do well and pay well if properly cultivated. Grapes, pears, cherries and the smaller fruits especially succeed well and never fail. A few improvements, such as the extension, or rather the grading and paving, of Pennsylvania avenue to its terminus, and in connection therewith the rebuilding of the bridge across the Eastern Branch, together with a suitable road to the Maryland line, would fully revive this long-overlooked and non-appreciated section of the city and suburbs."

We see no good reason why the present discrimination should be continued in these respects also.

Right in the heart of the best part of the eastern section are sixteen squares, large and small, bounded by 6th and 11th Sts., A St. south and Pa. Avenue, where the streets have not been touched, the sidewalks not set out, the road bed not graded, and no trees planted. Through these run N. C. and S. C. Avenues, on which new buildings are being erected, as on many of the streets, and to this day there is not even a tree on them, although trees are being planted outside of the city limits in the Northwest. On some of the streets, notably 8th, the improvements have been made, as to grading, setting out the sidewalks and planting trees from East Capitol to South A, and there stopped. From there all the way down to Pa. Ave., not a thing has been done; and though citizens have petitioned time and again to have the street merely regulated, by the bringing out of the sidewalks and placing them at grade, so they could plant trees at their own expense, and although that has been provided for in the estimates, and shown on the official map as done in part, it has never been done, and the provision for it has been finally dropped from the estimates. Some of that property is owned by the most enterprising business citizens of that section, who have their homes there, and some of whom have already paid more for sidewalks, change of grade, &c., than the property itself cost.

In wet weather it is almost impossible to drive through many of these streets; and even with ordinary summer showers, one is obliged to twist and turn in all directions to avoid the mud holes. East of 11th street there has been absolutely no improvements, except the deep cuts made by the Board of Works, which are worse than none.

If it be said that east of 11th is mainly unoccupied, we answer so was the extreme northwest until the improvements were made there. Moreover, the eastern section is naturally much easier to improve

than the "slashes" and commons of the northwest, with its hills, ravines and pond holes. Besides, the eastern section is not owned and held for speculation as the other was and is. No "real estate pool" or ring has ever operated there, and we can see no valid reason why it should not receive its share of the improvements. It all pays taxes. It is simply because no improvements are made there, that it is not and cannot be built up.

South of the Capitol it is equally bad. There is hardly a street that one can drive through east and west. Indeed, from the boundary on the north to the river on the south there are only about a half a dozen streets that are passable. Compare this condition with that of the west end, and no one can fail to see how unjust and persistent the discrimination has been.

As long ago as 1875, Lieutenant Hoxie, in his report, said:

"On Capitol Hill the grading under contract has been diminished about one half, and the work distributed upon other streets. The improvements intended for certain localities have been transferred to others, and the character of the improvements modified as circumstances seemed to demand."

What the circumstances were which demanded this change he does not tell us; nor was it necessary, for all of us who resided here, and understood the motives and influences which controlled, know perfectly well that it was the "demand" of the "real estate pool" and speculators, who controlled everything in their own interests.

AS TO SEWERS.

The western section was generally provided with sewers along with its street improvements, but in the eastern section, whenever a citizen desires to build, although the building regulations made by the Commissioners requires him to connect his house with a sewer, still they have persistently refused to provide sewers to connect with, and require individuals to build them at their own expense, their excuse being that there is no appropriation, simply because they had neglected to include them in their estimates; and when, as in the present season, money is used for that purpose, nearly all of it is expended in the western section, as shown by the recent advertisement for bids.

The official map of sewers published in 1880, shows that even adjoining the Capitol grounds there are no sewers except such as have been built by individuals at their own expense; that Maryland avenue has none from the Capitol to 7th street; and that there are whole squares within a few squares of the Capitol which have no sewers, and very few of the avenues have any.

How that section is affected by this want of sewers is illustrated by the following from the *Republic* of December, last:—

"A short time ago a gentleman of this city, of the name of Smith (no fiction), purchased a nice lot on Pennsylvania avenue, southeast, suitable for two nice residences, contemplating the erection thereon of two dwelling houses at a cost of

ten thousand dollars. As there was no sewer-main directly along the front line of his lot, he requested permission to connect diagonally across said avenue some two hundred feet, exclusively at his own expense, with a large sewer-main of a capacity at least ten times beyond the greatest possibilities of every present inlet source of supply. But Mr. Hoxie, to whom he was referred, denied his request and admonished him to abandon the location he had selected and to settle down at the West End, where water and sewer conveniences were already provided.

"Finally, several of the most reputable gentlemen of the vicinity went with him to intercede for him with the Commissioners, and after consultation, a quorum being present, the board unanimously ordered and by endorsement on his application directed that permission be granted as he had requested.

"But on going to Captain Hoxie for the permit he was still refused, and as I am assured, incredible as it may appear, Mr. Smith was ordered to get out of the office. At any rate, dismayed and discouraged, the projected enterprise on Capitol Hill was abandoned and his investment in the northwest has been made as if by a forced obedience to a military edict."

In another case, a resident on Maryland avenue who built before there were any sewers, and instead had dug a cess-pool on the rear of his lot, and whose daughter lay at the point of death from typhoid fever, induced, as her physician assured him, by the presence of that cess-pool, asked permission to connect it, at his own expense, through the alley with the nearest sewer; he was absolutely refused! And when, in his desperation and as the only means of saving the life of his family, he attempted to make the connection without a permit, he was arrested and taken before the Police Court; a proceeding that Chief Justice Cartter denounced as one of the grossest outrages ever perpetrated on a citizen. These are samples of the treatment our citizens have received in the matter of sewers.

THE WATER SERVICE.

As all know, the residents on the high grounds east of the Capitol, have suffered more than all others for want of water. So serious has been the trouble from that source, that many persons have left the Hill in consequence, as stated by Senator Beck in the Senate.

Notwithstanding, instead of making any effort to relieve them, your predecessors expended a large sum—reported at over \$70,000—to build a stand-pipe for the special benefit of a section of the northwest, and which entails an annual expense of about \$15,000. When building it they asserted that it was to supply Capitol Hill.

See Water Register's report for 1878, p. 13.

Sen. Mis. Doc. No. 37, 45 Cong. 3 Ses.

At the urgent request of the citizens of the Hill, Congress gave them the \$25,000 asked for that purpose, and added thereto these words: "And the money so advanced shall be expended to improve the water supply on Capitol Hill."

See Act approved June 10, 1879.

Notwithstanding this positive direction by Congress, that money was never used for any such purpose. Instead of connecting the

stand pipe with the Hill, they reduced our supply by tapping our supply main with a 12 inch pipe, and running it from Massachusetts avenue down 4th and 4½ streets to the low grounds southwest of the Botanical Garden. That was paid for out of the water fund. Not content with that, they spent \$647.28 of that appropriation to assist in the purchase of a steam pump, &c., *for the use of a private citizen*, to pump water out of our mains, (although not so stated,) and thus further lessen the general supply on the Hill. The balance of the \$25,000 they neglected to use, and it went back into the Treasury.

See Sen. Miss. Doc. No. 51, 46th Cong., 2d ses.

How the eastern section has been discriminated against since, is shown by the fact, that since 1878, there has been laid water mains, as follows:

In the N. W. quarter	30,736 ft.
" S. W. "	4,290 "
" S. E. "	875 "
" N. E. "	336 "

Thus showing that while the west has had 35,026 feet, the east has had but 1,211 feet.

For a year past citizens have tried in vain to get a small main laid on Maryland avenue, within four squares of the Capitol, to supply dwellings. It is also a fact that the mains laid in the east are much smaller, and therefore cost far less per foot than those in the west.

Again, it is shown in the fire plugs, of which there have been provided at the west	35
East of the Capitol	1

The same disproportion will also be found in the lamp posts set, and, in fact, in nearly everything done by the District government.

THE PERMIT FUND.

For years Congress has appropriated quite a sum for permit work, it having been raised from \$20,000 last year to \$30,000 for the present year. This fund is ostensibly used to furnish material to citizens who are willing to pay for the work required where absolutely necessary.

How it has been used, can be seen by visiting squares 155 and 156, on Q street between Seventeenth and Eighteenth and New Hampshire avenue. There will be seen the most expensive granite curb, brick walk, and shade trees nicely boxed, while on one square *there is not even a shanty*, and only six buildings recently erected on the other—there not being even a foot path along the north side of the latter. That property is owned by one man, who holds it merely for speculation! That is but one sample of many.

Again, a considerable amount of public funds is used to pay contractors who are excavating for buildings in the west end, for dumping the excavated earth into the hollows and ponds of that section to improve the streets and, consequently, the property of real estate, speculators there. It is thus that this permit fund and others is being and has been continuously used for the benefit of the west end, to the exclusion of the section east of the Capitol.

Again, it should be borne in mind that the great bulk of the large sums annually appropriated for the Engineer's Department is expended in that section, necessarily, as the bulk of the work is done there.

The same is also true of the appropriations for sweeping the streets and cleaning the alleys, there being but few paved streets to be swept east of the Capitol, and very few paved alleys.

Indeed alleys, which have been rendered nuisances, detrimental to health, and repeatedly condemned as such by the Health Officer, and which were so rendered by the acts of the Board of Public Works, and that too within a square of the Capitol Grounds, we have been unable to get anything done with, although petitioned for time and again. Yet we are assured that alleys have been paved, for influential parties in other sections, in whole or in part, at public expense.

So, too, as to the money expended for surveys to extend the streets and avenues. It is all expended in the northwest, and principally for the benefit of speculators.

The excuse for thus expending the money in the west end has been that it was necessary to replace the wood pavements; but, as Senator Sherman well says, that is not a sufficient answer to our complaints. It should be borne in mind that two-thirds of those wood pavements were paid for out of the public funds, and that the entire set of new concrete pavements made in the western portion are also paid for out of the general fund, and thus we have to help pay for two sets of pavements for that favored section, while we have never had any. Besides, miles of new concrete pavements have been made there, where there was never a foot of wood pavement.

Now, when it is borne in mind, as stated by Hoxie in his report of 1875, that "new buildings spring up *along the line of the improved streets*, and the work is hardly commenced before alterations of the old buildings is taken in hand to enlarge and improve them," and that "*the buildings have followed almost exclusively the line of the improved streets*," it will be seen how very unjust this discrimination is.

UNEQUAL TAXATION.

This injustice has been greatly intensified by the inequality of taxation in the two sections, as shown by the official report of the Assessor for the present year, in which he says:

"A new assessment of real estate for the coming year would seem to be a ne.

cessity in order to equalize values, which GREATLY INCREASED IN THE NORTH-WESTERN PART OF THE CITY and DECREASED IN THE EASTERN AND SOUTHEAST, as well as in many portions of Georgetown, since the last general assessment of 1878. For instance, twenty squares between Fifteenth and Twenty-first and M and P streets, northwest, are now assessed at an average value of 38 CENTS PER SQUARE FOOT, and it is well known that the present value WOULD EXCEED \$1.30. This average is calculated from RECENT ACTUAL SALES."

Thus, while this favored section pays taxes at but little over *one-fourth* its actual value, our property pays taxes at a fourth *more* than its value, thus making us pay nearly *four times as much, in proportion to the value of our property, as they do!* And when you add to this the fact that nearly all the taxes we pay are expended in that section, and that, too, largely for the benefit of real estate rings and non-resident speculators, it would seem that injustice could hardly go further.

ILLEGAL ACTION.

In order more fully to carry out this policy of discrimination in favor of the western section, the Commissioners even went so far as to expend money there in plain open violation of the law by improving streets not included in their estimates, and for which no appropriation had been made. At the same time, for years, they refused to expend the money that had been appropriated in accordance with their own estimates on streets that would have benefitted the eastern section.

To relieve them of this illegal action, they secured the insertion in the appropriation bill for 1883 of a disguised provision, which relieves them of the responsibility of their action in that respect to the amount of \$50,000; and an application is now being energetically pressed before the Comptroller, by one of the ex-Commissioners, for relief from the responsibility of an additional \$50,000 misapplied by them in the same way, and which the Attorney-General has just decided cannot be done.

Whether this discrimination has been due to the fact, as alleged by some of the Senators, that the District officers have all been appointed from the favored section, you can judge as well as we; but if you will compare the following list of officers and their localities with the map showing where the great bulk of the improvements have been made, you will find a most striking coincidence:

Executive and Engineer Officers of the District Government from the organization in 1871 to 1882, inclusive.

Name.	Period of Service.	Term in months.	Residence,
Cooke.....Governor	May 19, 1871, to Sept. 14, 1873...	28	170 Washington St., Geo't'n,
Shepherd.. do	Sept. 15, 1873, to June 30, 1874..	9½	Conn. Av. and L St., N. W.
Shepherd...B. P. W.	March 16, 1871, to Sept. 14, 1873	30	Conn. Av. and L St., N. W.
Magruder.. do	March 16, 1871, to June 30, 1874	39½	100 West St., Georgetown.
Brown..... do	March 16, 1871, to May 23, 1873	26½	Mt. Pleasant.
Mullet..... do	July 1, 1871, to Oct. 22, 1872....	15¼	Green St., Georgetown.
Cluss..... do	Oct. 23, 1872, to June 30, 1874...	20¼	415 2d St., N. W.
Willard..... do	May 24, 1873, to June 30, 1874..	13¼	1337 K St., N. W.
Blake..... do	Sept. 22, 1873, to June 30, 1874..	9¼	427 E St., N. W.
Dennison.... Comm'r	July 1, 1874, to June 30, 1878...	48	16th and H Sts., N. W.
Blow..... do	July 1, 1874, to Jan. 1875....	6	16th and H Sts., N. W.
Ketchum.... do	July 3, 1874, to June 30, 1877....	36	16th and H Sts., N. W.
Phelps..... do	Jan. 18, 1875, to June 30, 1878..	41½	1500 13th St., N. W.
Bryan..... do	July 1, 1877 to June 30, 1878....	12	1407 Mass. Av., N. W.
Phelps....Per. Com.	July 1, 1878, to Nov. 29, 1879....	17	Iowa Circle, N. W.
Dent..... do	July 1, 1878, to June 30, 1879....	12	Georgetown.
Twining!.. do	July 1, 1878, to May 5, 1882....	46¼	720 14th St., N. W.
Dent..... do	July 1, 1879, to July 17, 1882....	36½	Georgetown.
Morgan... do	Nov. 30, 1879, to Dec. 15, 1879....	½	1718 R. I. Av., N. W.
Morgan... do	Dec. 16, 1879, to Dec. 31, 1882....	36½	1718 R. I. Av., N. W.
Lydecker.. do	May 13, 1882, to Dec. 31, 1882 ..	7½	R. I. Av., N. W.
West..... do	July 18, 1882, to Dec. 31, 1882....	5½	815 15th St., N. W.
Hoxic.....Engineer	July 2, 1874, to Dec. 31, 1882....	102	929 17th St., N. W.
Greene.... do	May 15, 1879, to Dec 31, 1882....	43½	1915 G St., N. W.
Edmonds.... Comm'r	March 1, 1883.....	1625 K St., N. W.
		642½	

Taking into account the length of their terms of service, it will be seen that—

Georgetown has had.....	24 per cent.
The "West End,".....	68 "
Mt. Pleasant, outside of the City.....	4 "
The eastern part of the N. W. quarter.....	4 "
All the rest of the District.....	0 "

We do not mean to charge that these men were "sinners above all other men," but it was long ago said that "where a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also," and as the records show where these officials resided, there the money has been expended.

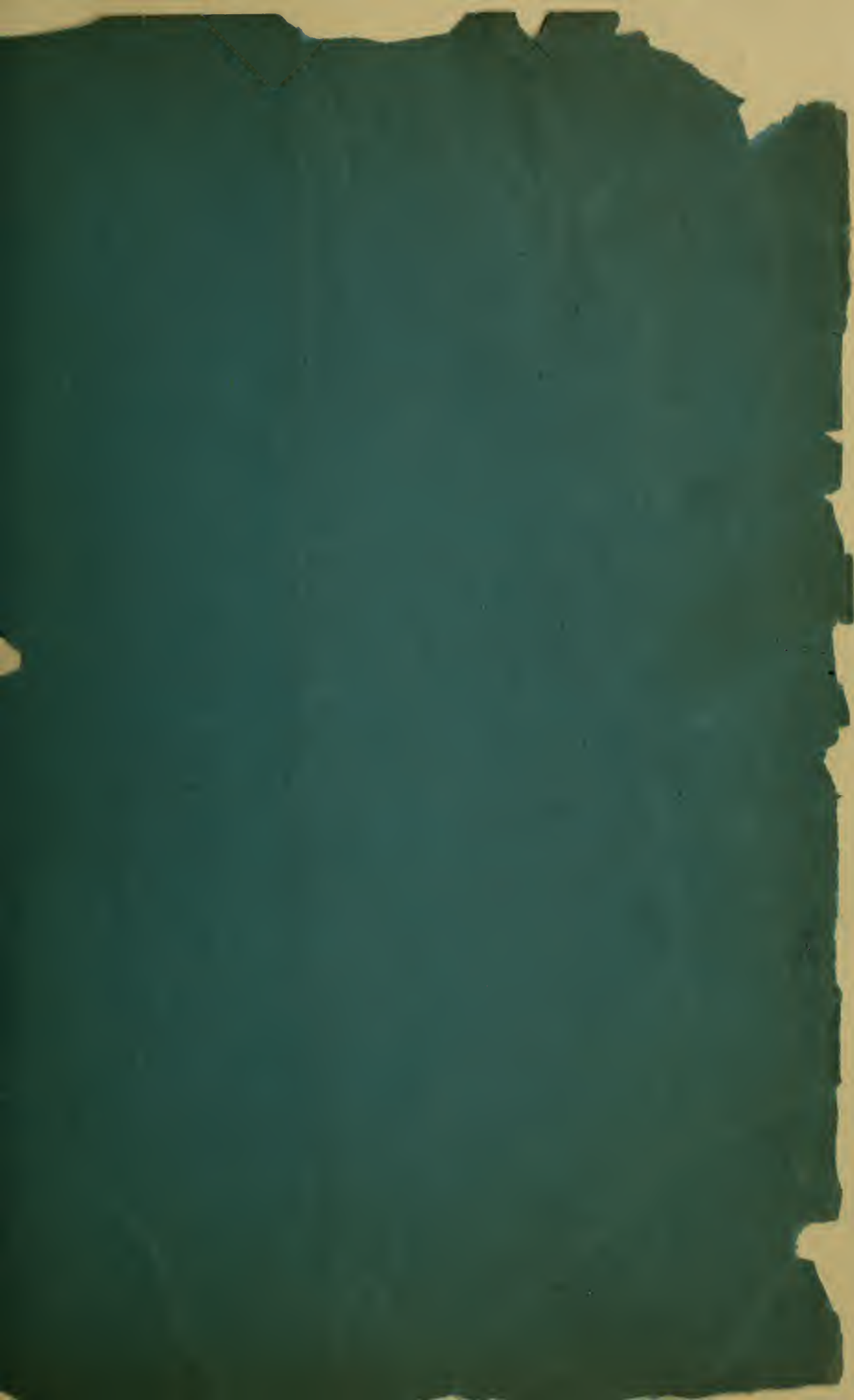
The very fact that you gentlemen all reside in that section, should, and we trust will, render you all the more careful to see that full justice be done that section which has not, and never has had any representative on your board.

H. E. PAINE, 204 A street, S. E. ;
 JOHN FARNSWORTH, 50 B street, N. E. ;
 W. C. DODGE, 116 B street, N. E. ;
 S. C. CLARKE, 501 Stanton Place, N. E. ;

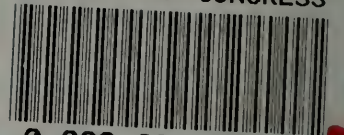
R. W. TYLER, 621 East Capitol street ;
DUNCAN S. WALKER, 202 A street, S. E.
GEO. F. HARBIN, 223 Eighth street, S. E. ;
JOHN E. HERRELL, 916 Penn. avenue, S. E. ;
R. M. GREEN, 416 C street, S. E. ;
G. M. OYSTER, 212 East Capitol street ;
THOMAS TAYLOR, 238 Massachusetts avenue ;
APPLETON P. CLARK, 119 Sixth street, N. E. ;
N. A. FULLER, 628 A street, S. E. ;
S. A. H. MARKS, 649 G street, S. E. ;
D. T. JONES, 637 B street, N. E. ;
T. L. DELAND, 126 Seventh street, N. E. ;
S. H. WALKER, 200 Fifth street, N. E. ;

Committee.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *July 19, 1883.*



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